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LETTER DATED 20 JANUARY 1994 FROM THE CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF YUGOSLAVIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

With reference to Mr. Silajdzic's letter dated 7 December 1993 (S/1994/4), upon instructions of my Government, I have the honour to point out the following:

The Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia denies in the strongest terms the malicious charges contained in the said letter and its enclosure. These shameless fabrications, advanced by Mr. Silajdzic, are put forward in order to misguide the Security Council and represent one of the numerous attempts to postpone the achievement of a political solution based on the agreement of all three peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In the enclosure, the Bosnian Muslims claim that a number of violations of the no-fly zone, perpetrated by the "Serbian aviation", occurred in the period between 2 November and 4 December 1993 and that the Bosnian Serb forces, in their offensives, used chemical and biological weapons, surface-to-surface missiles and cassette bombs.

Regarding the allegations contained in enclosure A of Mr. Silajdzic's letter, it should be noted that the data contained in it are in complete contravention with the information on the apparent violations of the flights ban in the airspace of Bosnia and Herzegovina, contained in the Secretary-General's notes addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/24900/Add.94-100).

According to those reports, in the above-mentioned period between 2 November and 4 December 1993, there were 78 unauthorized flights in the airspace of Bosnia and Herzegovina, of which 48 have been attributed to the Bosnian Croats, 17 to the Bosnian Serbs and 10 to the "Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina". One flight occurred on the border between areas controlled by the "Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina" and Bosnian Croats and two flights occurred in the contested area.

Mr. Silajdzic's hatred of the Serbs led him to make up the flights of the "Serbian aviation" despite the fact that none of those flights listed in the enclosure A correspond to the information provided by the official United

Nations sources. He is also putting the blame on the Federal Republic Of Yugoslavia for interference in Bosnia and Herzegovina, stating that some of the alleged air raids, which according to Mr. Silajdzic took place on 28 November 1993, had originated from the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

This assertion is in total contravention with the Secretary-General's note dated 30 November 1993 addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/24900/Add.98), in which it is stated, inter alia, that: "Between 27 and 29 November 1993, there appear to have been no flights of fixed- or rotary-wing aircraft in the airspace of Bosnia and Herzegovina other than those exempted in accordance with paragraph 1 of resolution 816 (1993) or approved by the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in accordance with paragraph 2 of that resolution". Besides, none of the remaining violations mentioned in the letter of Mr. Silajdzic took place, which is supported by the reports of the United Nations and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces that monitor the no-fly zone over Bosnia and Herzegovina with the most sophisticated equipment. And finally, United Nations military observers, deployed on a 24-hour basis at the airfields in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, did not report on any occasion so far, that the aircraft of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Air Force had been engaged in the action in the territory of the former Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Those reports are also supported by the United States Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff, General John Shalikashvili, who, at the briefing in the White House on 4 January 1994, stated: "In the case of helicopters, repeatedly the United Nations commanders on the ground have indicated that the helicopter flights that are being observed are not militarily significant and that their recommendation is that we do not - that NATO not take on the helicopter flights. It's different with fixed-wing aircraft, and I don't think you have any reports of any fixed-wing aircraft flying - unauthorized fixed-wing aircraft flying over Bosnia".

Mr. Silajdzic states in enclosure C, among other things, that on 7 November Serbian forces shelled the area of Gorazde with "chemical and biological warheads" and that, as of 11 November, "the villages of ... Zubeta ... in the vicinity of Olovo were totally burnt down". However, the updated UNPROFOR situation report for 10-12 November states that "The Muslim village of Zubeta, south-east of Vares, is still under BH control". Furthermore, it should be also noted that the UNPROFOR situation report of 7 November 1993 makes no mention of "chemical and biological warheads".

However, the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia wishes, on this occasion, to draw attention to the use of chemical weapons by the Muslim side in the civil war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Throughout the previous year, several high-ranking political and military Muslim leaders threatened the use of chemical weapons (A. Izetbegovic at the end of June 1993; president of the Tuzla region and the Commander of the Second Corps of the "Armed Forces of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina" in June 1993; UNPROFOR in its updated situation report on 20 October 1993 stated that the Bosnian Muslim commander in Tuzla admitted the use of chemical grenades in the area). The London-based "Defence and Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy" publication on 31 August 1993

reported that the Bosnian Muslim armed forces were using chemical weapons in north-central Bosnia, and that they were developing them with the assistance of "five chemical warfare experts" from a Middle East country. In distinction from groundless accusations advanced by the Muslim representative on the account of the Bosnian Serbs and for the alleged usage of the chemical means, the following verifiable facts should be taken into account: starting from 20 November 1993, the Muslim forces in the former Bosnia and Herzegovina began using chlorine-based chemical means in the area of Majevica, Teocak and Medjedja. Thus, as a result of those activities, in the Republic Srpska there were 25 poisoned persons, both military and civilian. Those activities were performed on 29 November 1993 and 7, 14, 15, 16 and 23 December 1993. The Muslims fired the chemical mines from 82-mm and 120-mm mortars, shelling 8 to 36 mines per target.

Regarding enclosure D about the alleged use of surface-to-surface missiles and cassette bombs, Mr. Silajdzic has put forward facts devoid of truth. All updated UNPROFOR situation reports for the period 20 November to 3 December 1993 fail to identify rockets and cassette bombs that have been seen only by Mr. Silajdzic.

What is at stake here is one more slanderous campaign whose sole purpose is to condemn unjustly the Serbs and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on the basis of the fabricated and unsubstantiated reports and accounts.

One can only conclude that the only source of Mr. Silajdzic's information are already tendentious and distorted reports by well-known ham radio operators. The Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia strongly considers that the Security Council, in its deliberations, should rely only on information which is confirmed by official United Nations sources.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Dragomir DJOKIC
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.